Chapter 35: The Couple's Christmas

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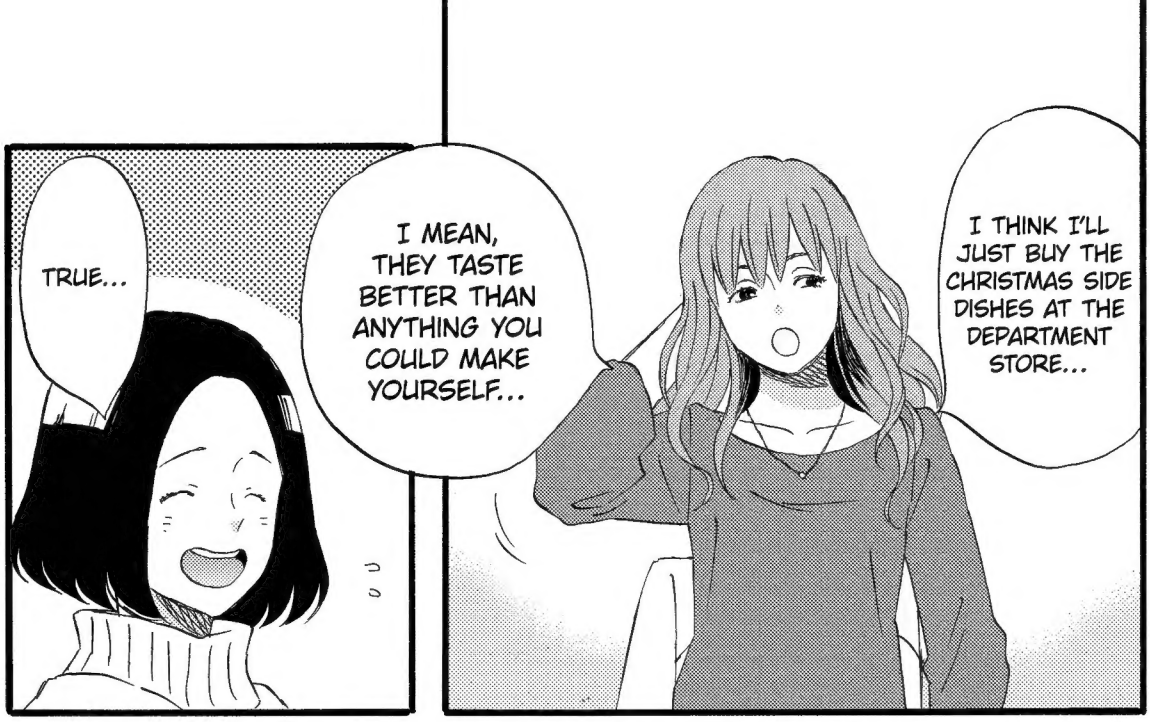
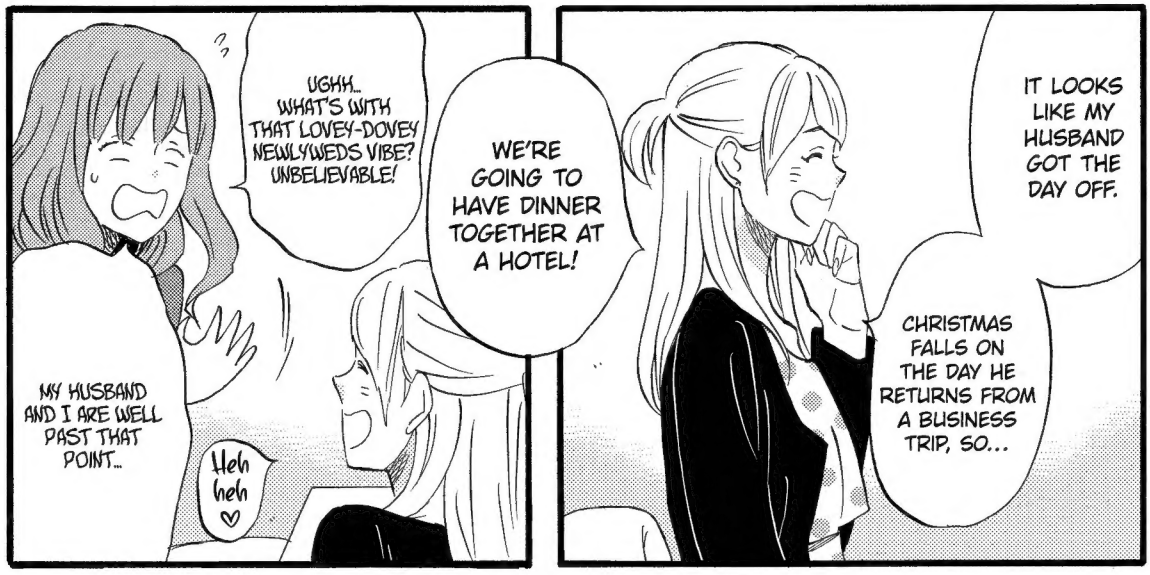
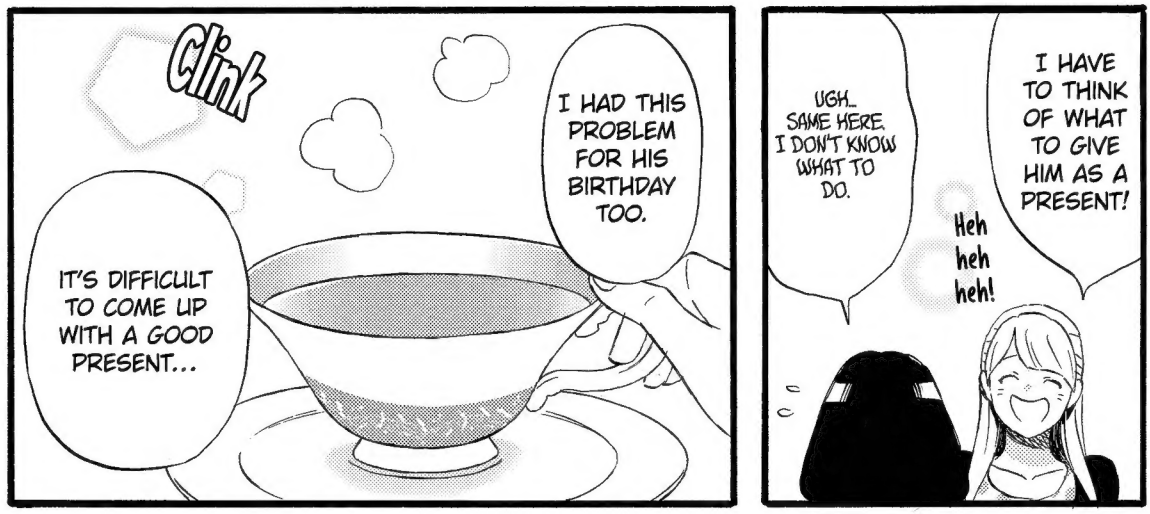
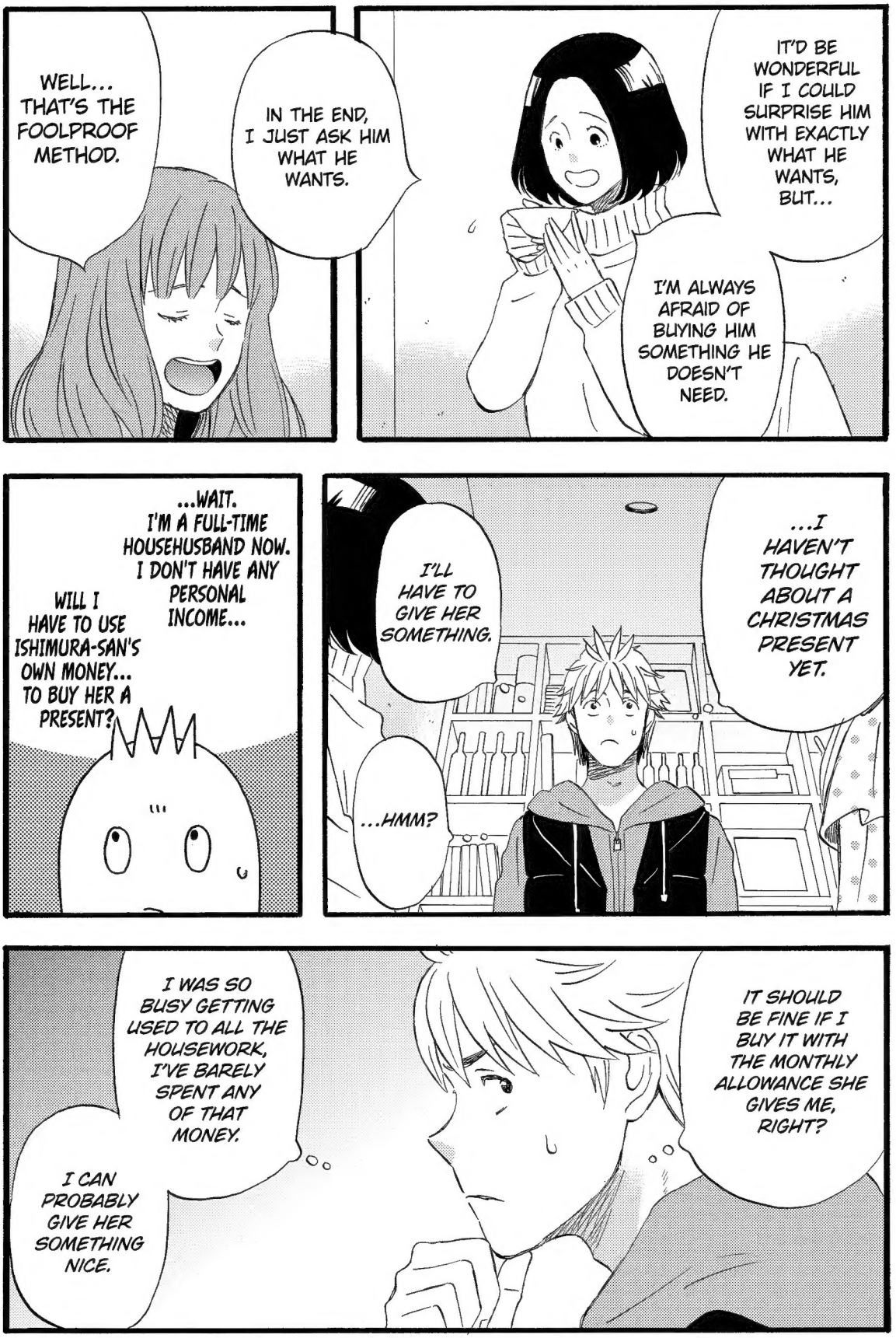
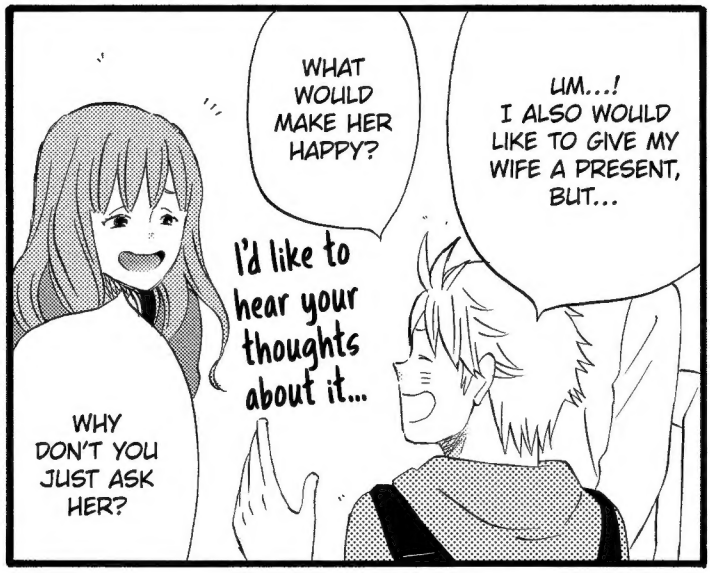
CHRISTMAS IS ALMOST HERE...
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
WE'LL HAVE TO PREPARE A SPECIAL MEAL FOR THAT NIGHT...
OH. WE WILL...


I THINK I'LL JUST BUY THE CHRISTMAS SIDE DISHES AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE...
I MEAN, THEY TASTE BETTER THAN ANYTHING YOU COULD MAKE YOURSELF...
TRUE...

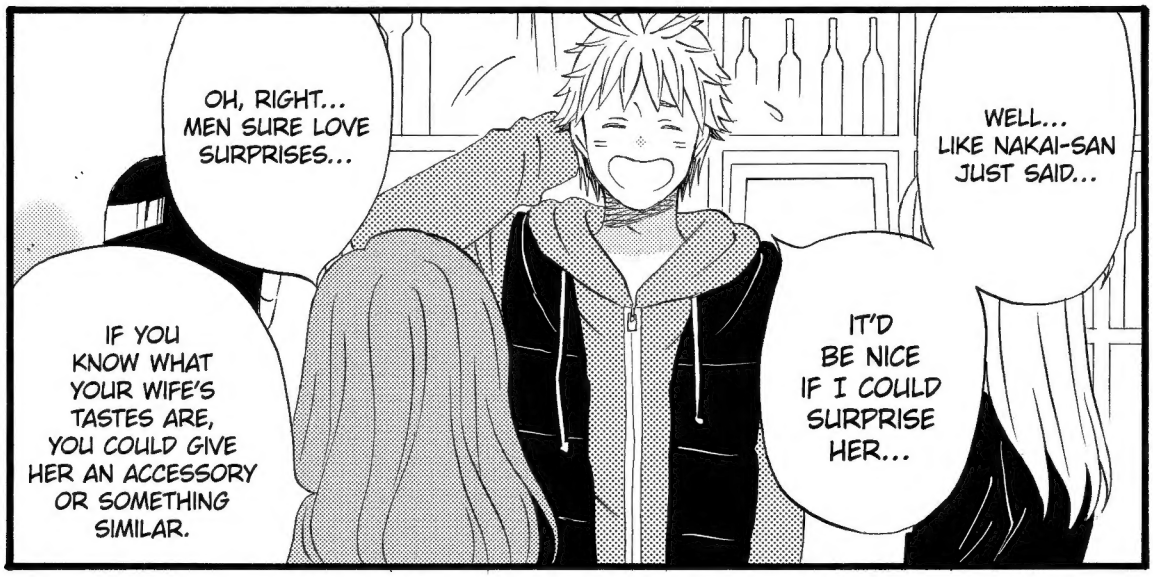

IT LOOKS LIKE MY HUSBAND GOT THE DAY OFF.
CHRISTMAS FALLS ON THE DAY HE RETURNS FROM A BUSINESS TRIP, SO...
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE DINNER TOGETHER AT A HOTEL!
UGHH... WHAT'S WITH THAT LOVEY-DOVEY NEWLYWEDS VIBE? UNBELIEVABLE!
MY HUSBAND AND I ARE WELL PAST THAT POINT...
Heh heh

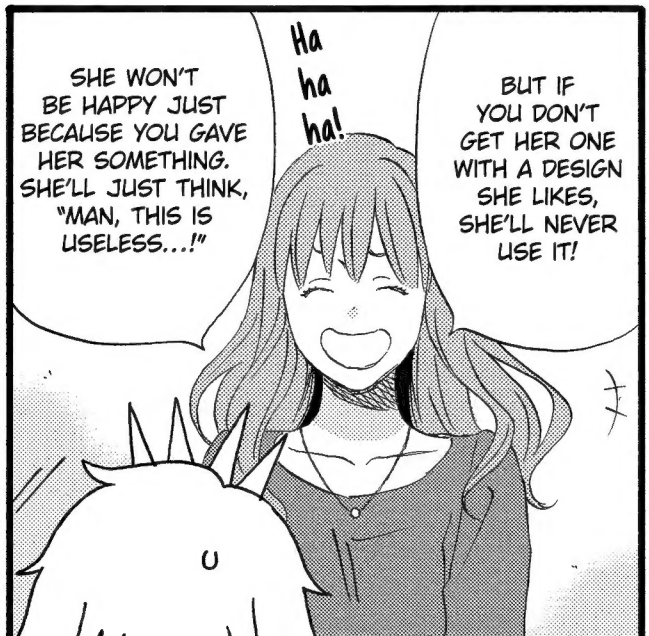

I HAVE TO THINK OF WHAT TO GIVE HIM AS A PRESENT!
UGH... SAME HERE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
Heh heh heh!
I HAD THIS PROBLEM FOR HIS BIRTHDAY TOO.
IT'S DIFFICULT TO COME UP WITH A GOOD PRESENT...
Clink

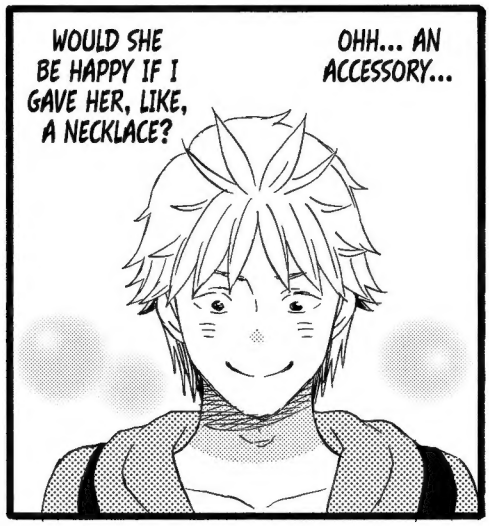

WELL... THAT'S THE FOOLPROOF METHOD.
IN THE END, I JUST ASK HIM WHAT HE WANTS.
IT'D BE WONDERFUL IF I COULD SURPRISE HIM WITH EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTS, BUT...
I'M ALWAYS AFRAID OF BUYING HIM SOMETHING HE DOESN'T NEED.
...WAIT. I'M A FULL-TIME HOUSEHUSBAND NOW. I DON'T HAVE ANY PERSONAL INCOME...
WILL I HAVE TO USE ISHIMURA-SAN'S OWN MONEY... TO BUY HER A PRESENT?
...I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT A CHRISTMAS PRESENT YET.
I'LL HAVE TO GIVE HER SOMETHING.
...HMM?
IT SHOULD BE FINE IF I BUY IT WITH THE MONTHLY ALLOWANCE SHE GIVES ME, RIGHT?
I WAS SO BUSY GETTING USED TO ALL THE HOUSEWORK, I'VE BARELY SPENT ANY OF THAT MONEY.
I CAN PROBABLY GIVE HER SOMETHING NICE.

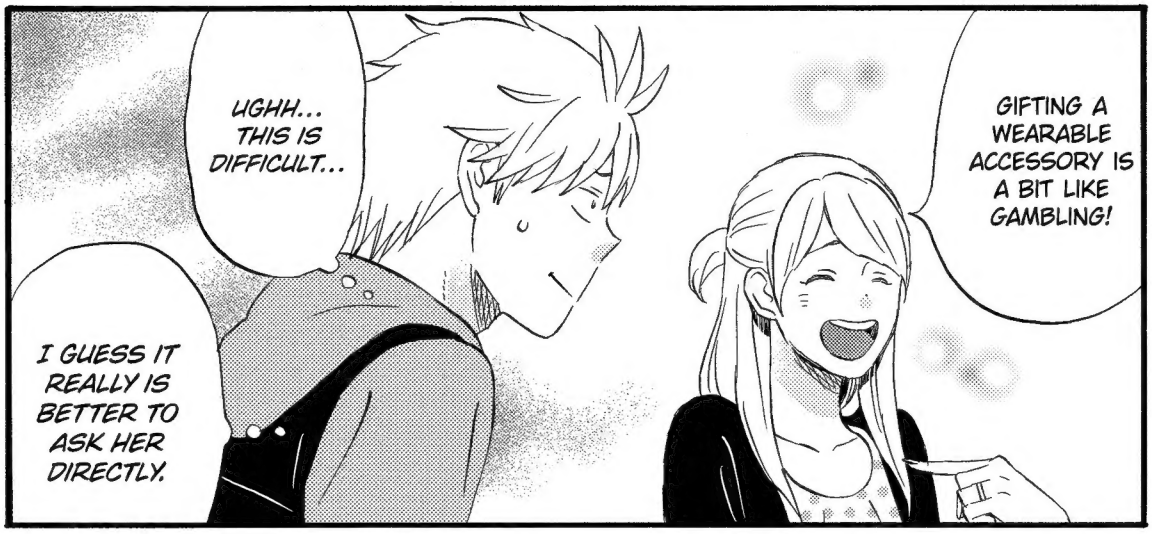

WHAT WOULD MAKE HER HAPPY?
UM...! I ALSO WOULD LIKE TO GIVE MY WIFE A PRESENT, BUT...
I'd like to hear your thoughts about it...
WHY DON'T YOU JUST ASK HER?

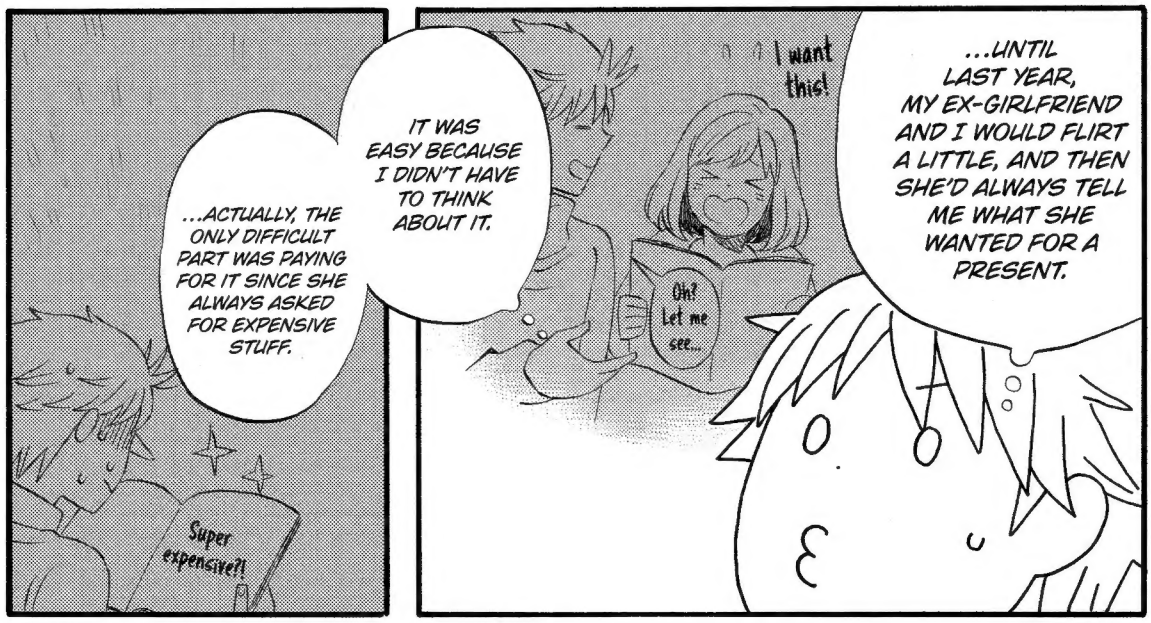
A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR ISHIMURA-SAN... WHAT WOULD SHE LIKE?

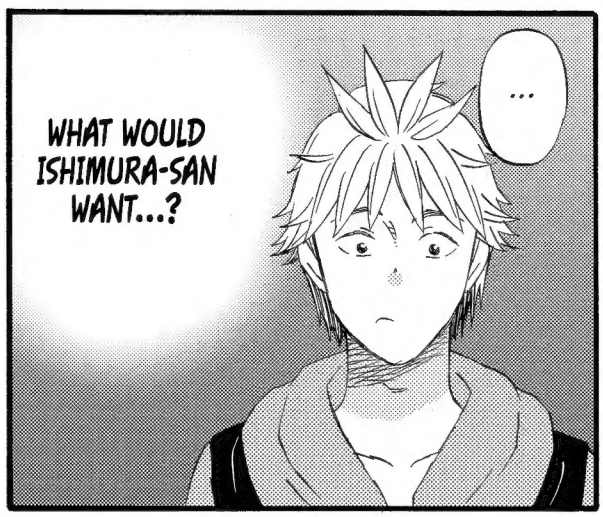

OH, RIGHT... MEN SURE LOVE SURPRISES...
WELL... LIKE NAKAI-SAN JUST SAID...
IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR WIFE'S TASTES ARE, YOU COULD GIVE HER AN ACCESSORY OR SOMETHING SIMILAR.
IT'D BE NICE IF I COULD SURPRISE HER...

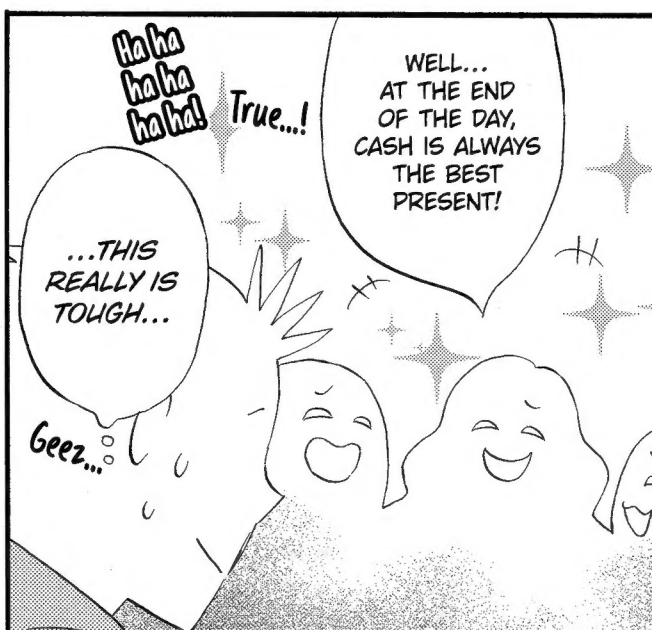

SHE WON'T BE HAPPY JUST BECAUSE YOU GAVE HER SOMETHING. SHE'LL JUST THINK, "MAN, THIS IS USELESS...!"
Ha ha ha!
BUT IF YOU DON'T GET HER ONE WITH A DESIGN SHE LIKES, SHE'LL NEVER USE IT!

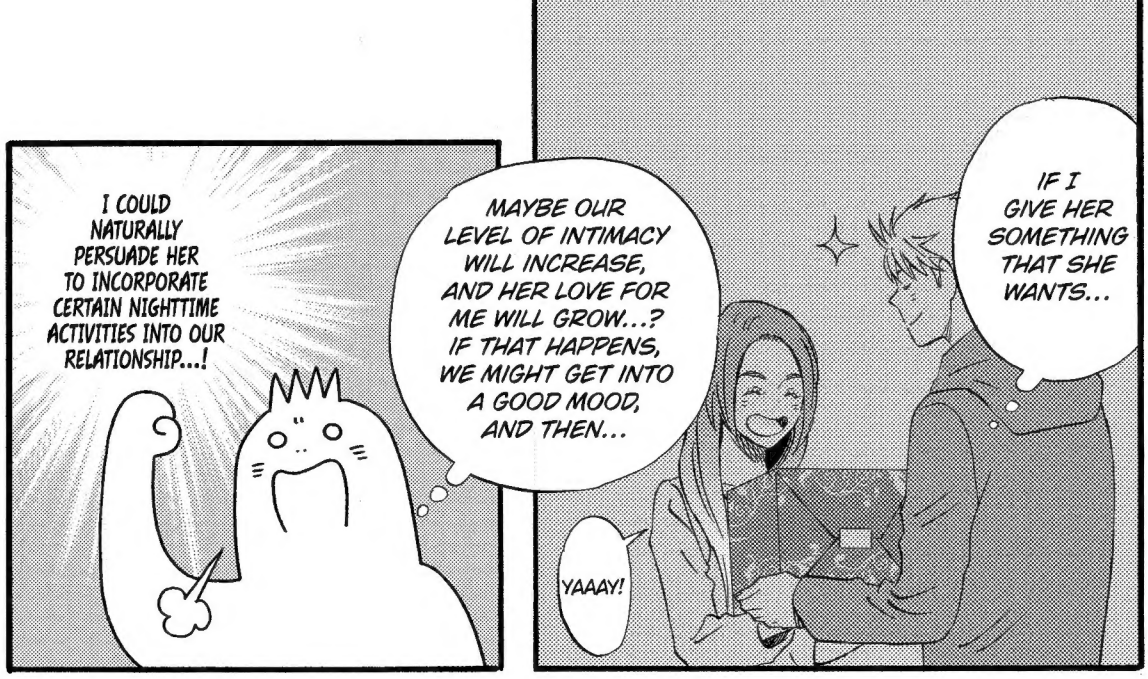

WOULD SHE BE HAPPY IF I GAVE HER, LIKE, A NECKLACE?
OHH... AN ACCESSORY...

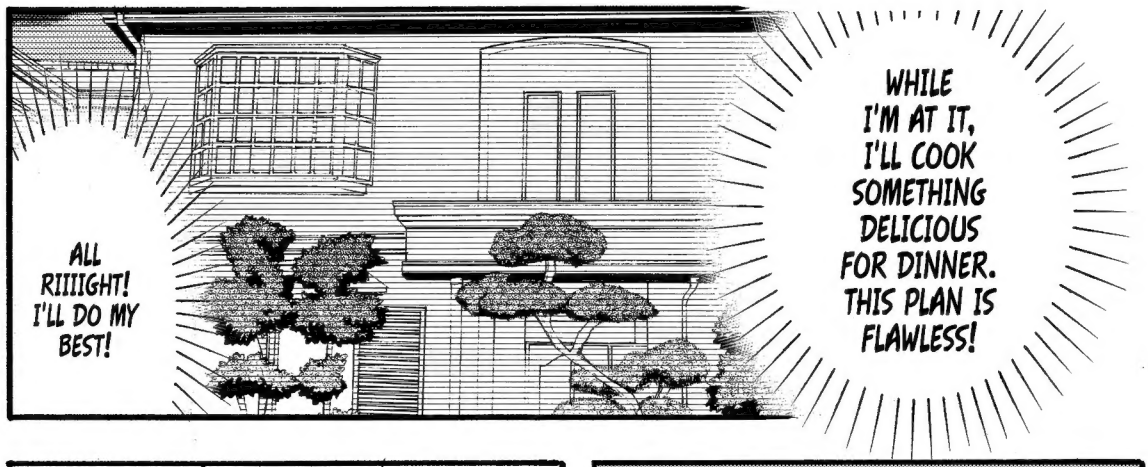

UGHH... THIS IS DIFFICULT...
GIFTING A WEARABLE ACCESSORY IS A BIT LIKE GAMBLING!
I GUESS IT REALLY IS BETTER TO ASK HER DIRECTLY.


...UNTIL LAST YEAR, MY EX-GIRLFRIEND AND I WOULD FLIRT A LITTLE, AND THEN SHE'D ALWAYS TELL ME WHAT SHE WANTED FOR A PRESENT.
I want this!
Oh! Let me see...
IT WAS EASY BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT.
...ACTUALLY, THE ONLY DIFFICULT PART WAS PAYING FOR IT SINCE SHE ALWAYS ASKED FOR EXPENSIVE STUFF.
Super expensive?!


WHAT WOULD ISHIMURA-SAN WANT...?
...

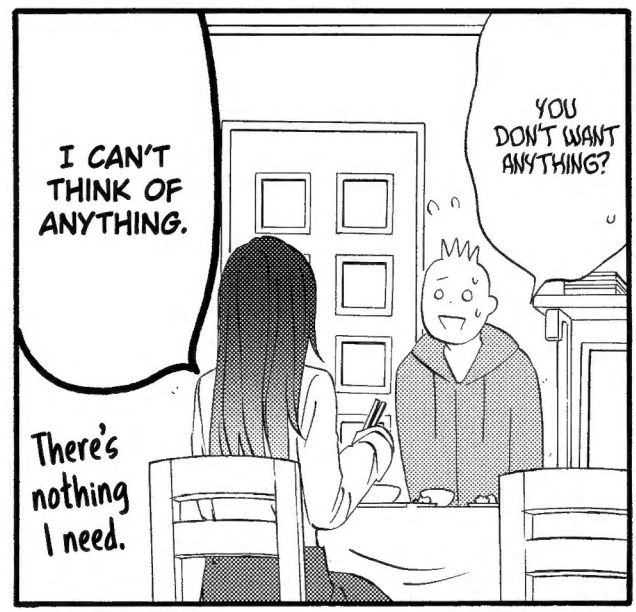

WELL... AT THE END OF THE DAY, CASH IS ALWAYS THE BEST PRESENT!
Ha ha ha ha ha ha!
True...!
...THIS REALLY IS TOUGH...
Geez...


I COULD NATURALLY PERSUADE HER TO INCORPORATE CERTAIN NIGHTTIME ACTIVITIES INTO OUR RELATIONSHIP...!
MAYBE OUR LEVEL OF INTIMACY WILL INCREASE, AND HER LOVE FOR ME WILL GROW...? IF THAT HAPPENS, WE MIGHT GET INTO A GOOD MOOD, AND THEN...
IF I GIVE HER SOMETHING THAT SHE WANTS...
YAAAY!


ALL RIIIIGHT! I'LL DO MY BEST!
WHILE I'M AT IT, I'LL COOK SOMETHING DELICIOUS FOR DINNER. THIS PLAN IS FLAWLESS!

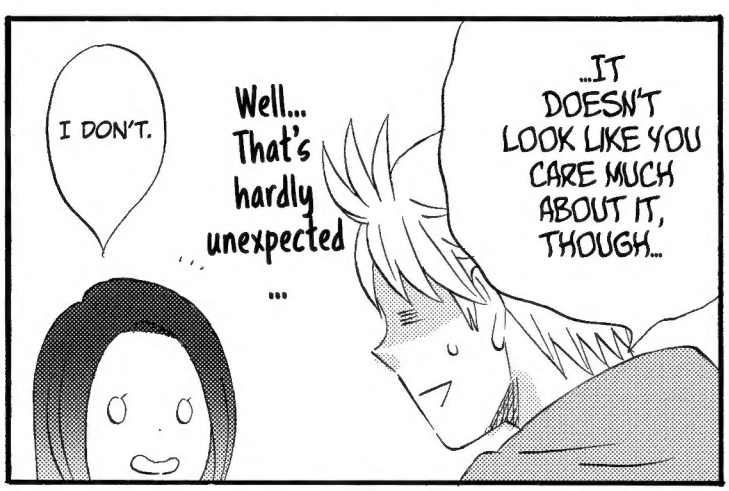
...HUH?
THERE'S NOTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT I WANT....

EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE GIFTS ARE A PROBLEM, BUT NOT GIVING ANYTHING AT ALL ISN'T MUCH BETTER!
What's wrong?


YOU DON'T WANT ANYTHING?
I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING.
There's nothing I need.

THE ONES I HAVE ARE GOOD ENOUGH, SO NOPE. I DON'T NEED AN EXTRA PAIR.
It would only get in the way.

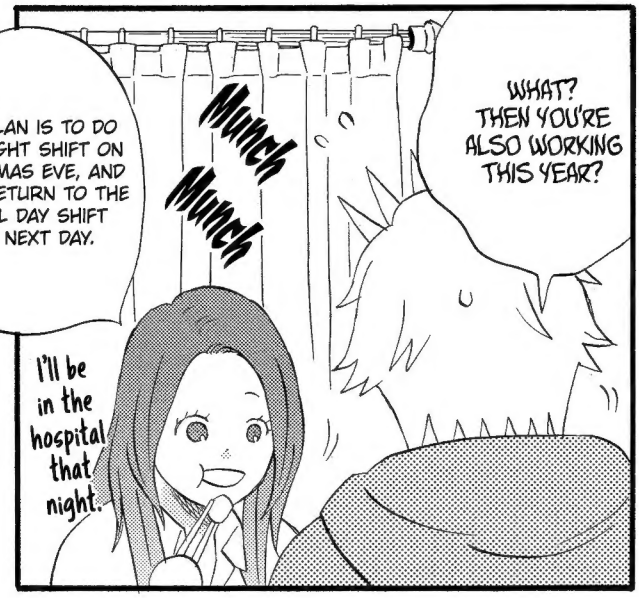
OH!
HOW ABOUT SOME COMFORTABLE SHOES TO WEAR TO YOUR POTTERY LESSONS?!
NO, NO, NO! SURELY THERE MUST BE SOMETHING. MAYBE AN ACCESSORY OR A BAG...?

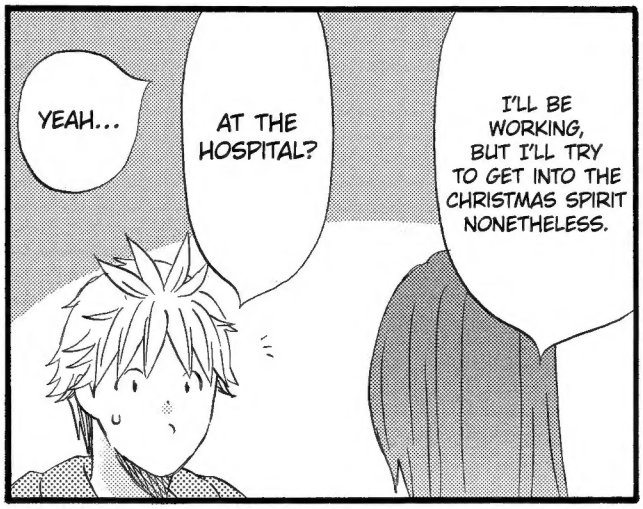

I DON'T.
Well... That's hardly unexpected ...
...IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE YOU CARE MUCH ABOUT IT, THOUGH...

THAT BEING SAID... IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS, HUH?

DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS?
...I'M WORKING.
Ohh...
FOR SOME REASON, THE NUMBER OF INVITATIONS I RECEIVE INCREASES AROUND THIS TIME OF YEAR...
FOR MANY YEARS, CHRISTMAS HAS BEEN ONLY A REGULAR WORKDAY FOR ME.
SO I ALWAYS THINK OF IT AS A TROUBLESOME EVENT.

THERE GOES THE "DELICIOUS DINNER" PLAN...
Siiiigh...


THE PLAN IS TO DO THE NIGHT SHIFT ON CHRISTMAS EVE, AND THEN RETURN TO THE USUAL DAY SHIFT THE NEXT DAY.
Munch Munch
WHAT? THEN YOU'RE ALSO WORKING THIS YEAR?
I'll be in the hospital that night.


YEAH...
AT THE HOSPITAL?
I'LL BE WORKING, BUT I'LL TRY TO GET INTO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT NONETHELESS.

...WELL, THIS IS ISHIMURA-SAN WE'RE TALKING ABOUT. OF COURSE THERE WOULDN'T BE A "SWEET NEWLYWED CHRISTMAS ♡" EVENT...

Ohh...

SHE PARTICULARLY ENJOYS THE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS THAT ARE UNIQUE TO THIS SEASON...

MY MOTHER LOVES IT.

I DON'T CARE MUCH ABOUT CHRISTMAS, BUT...

I'M THINKING OF MAKING SOME TIME TO LIVEN UP HER HOSPITAL ROOM.

THEN I MIGHT AS WELL PAY HER A VISIT. IF SHE LIKES CHRISTMAS, I'D LIKE TO DO SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR HER.

UM... CAN I PUT UP THE DECORATIONS, TOO?

I can help you...

YOU SEE, I DON'T HAVE A GREAT SENSE OF STYLE. I ENJOY CRAFTING THINGS BY HAND, BUT I'M APPARENTLY NOT THE BEST AT DECORATING.

Ohh...

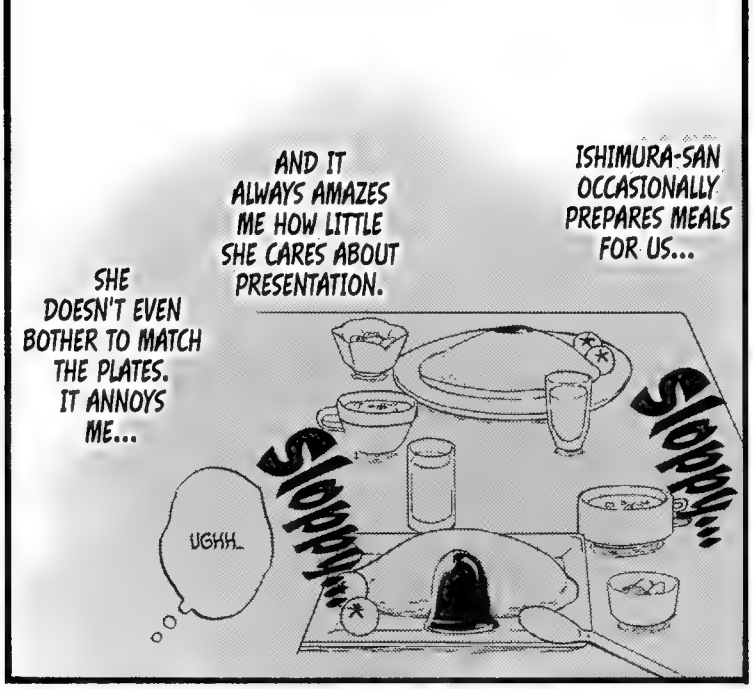
...I'D KIND OF NOTICED THAT BEFORE.

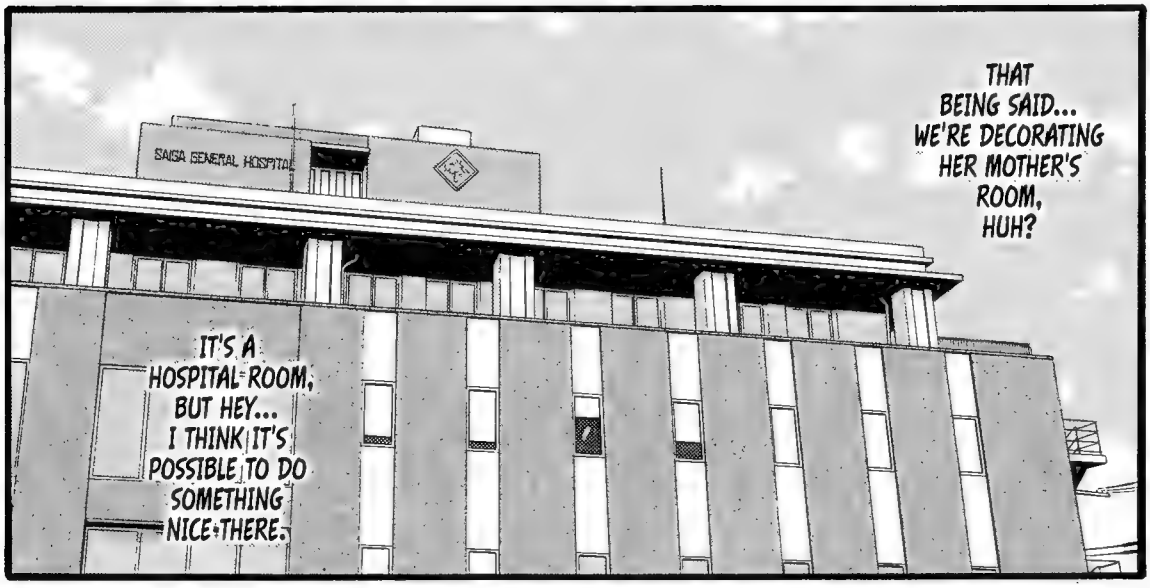
HUH?!

REALLY?! THAT'D BE A MASSIVE HELP!

What's with the sudden enthusiasm?

Hmm...
IT WASN'T UNTIL I STARTED COOKING THAT I REALIZED HOW PARTICULAR I AM ABOUT THAT.

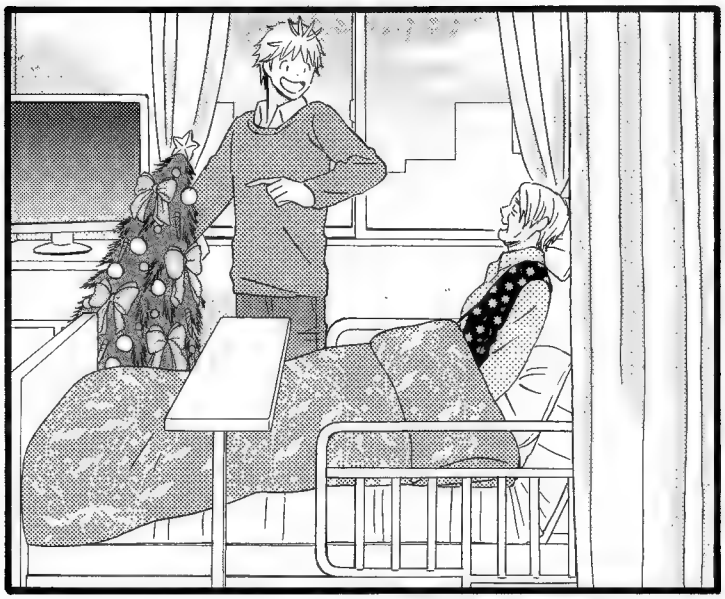

ISHIMURA-SAN OCCASIONALLY PREPARES MEALS FOR US...
AND IT ALWAYS AMAZES ME HOW LITTLE SHE CARES ABOUT PRESENTATION.
SHE DOESN'T EVEN BOTHER TO MATCH THE PLATES. IT ANNOYS ME...
Sloppy...
Sloppy...
UGHH...

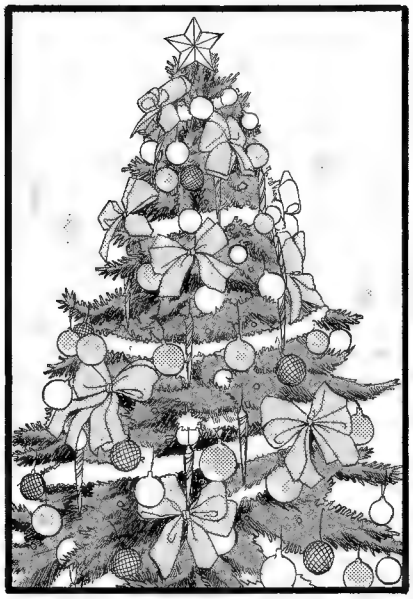

SAISA GENERAL HOSPITAL
THAT BEING SAID... WE'RE DECORATING HER MOTHER'S ROOM, HUH?
IT'S A HOSPITAL ROOM, BUT HEY... I THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TO DO SOMETHING NICE THERE.

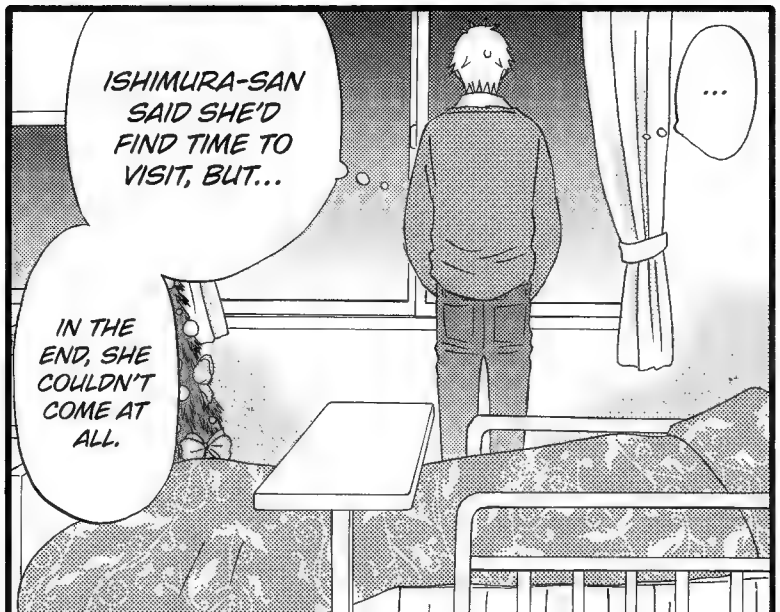
Pop
HELLO! HOW ARE YOU DOING TODAY, MOTHER?
305 ISHIMURA

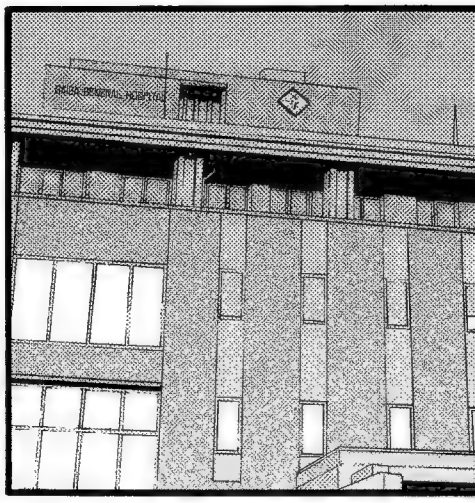
I'LL PUT UP THE CHRISTMAS TREE FIRST.
...IT'S PROBABLY BEST IF I GET STARTED RIGHT AWAY.

AI-SAN AND I WILL PUT UP SOME DECORATIONS IN YOUR ROOM!
TODAY IS CHRISTMAS EVE, SO...





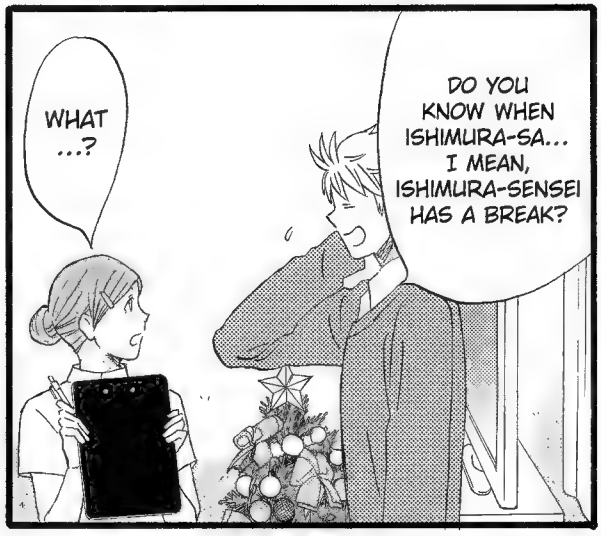

ISHIMURA-SAN SAID SHE'D FIND TIME TO VISIT, BUT...
IN THE END, SHE COULDN'T COME AT ALL.
...



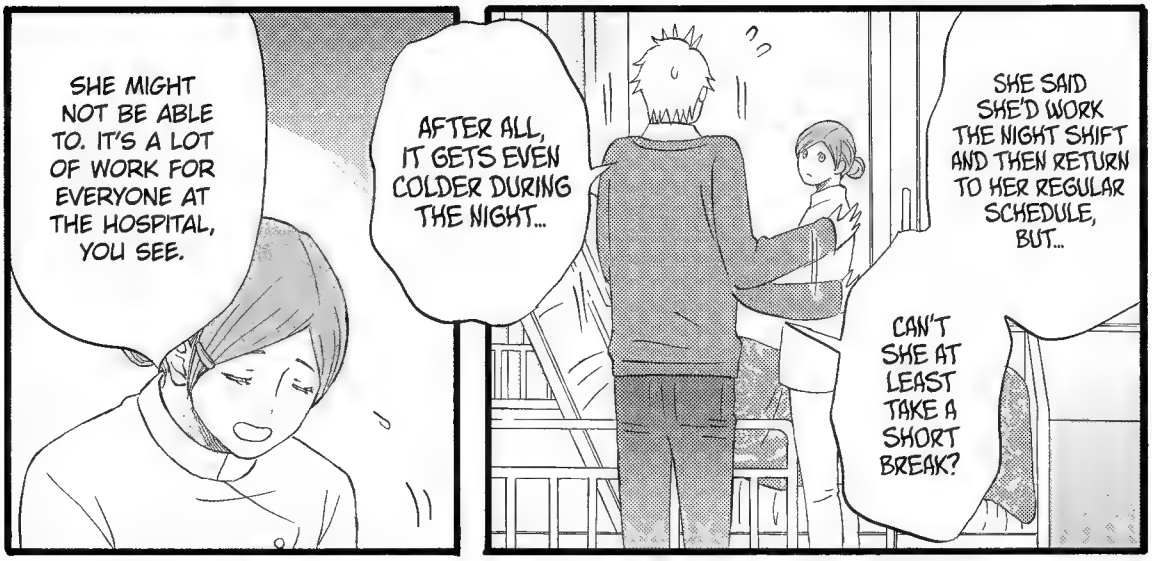
...UM!

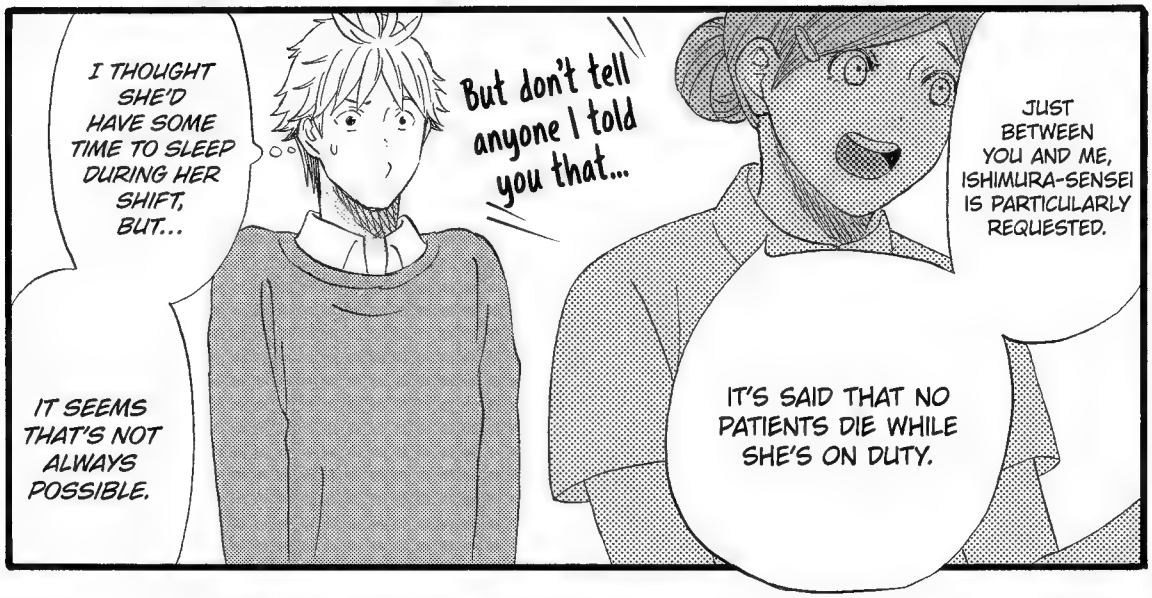
AH!
ISHIMURA-SENSEI'S HUSBAND IS HERE TODAY? GOOD EVENING...
OH. GOOD EVENING...

HMM... I DON'T THINK I KNOW...
YOU DON'T?


DO YOU KNOW WHEN ISHIMURA-SA... I MEAN, ISHIMURA-SENSEI HAS A BREAK?
WHAT ...?

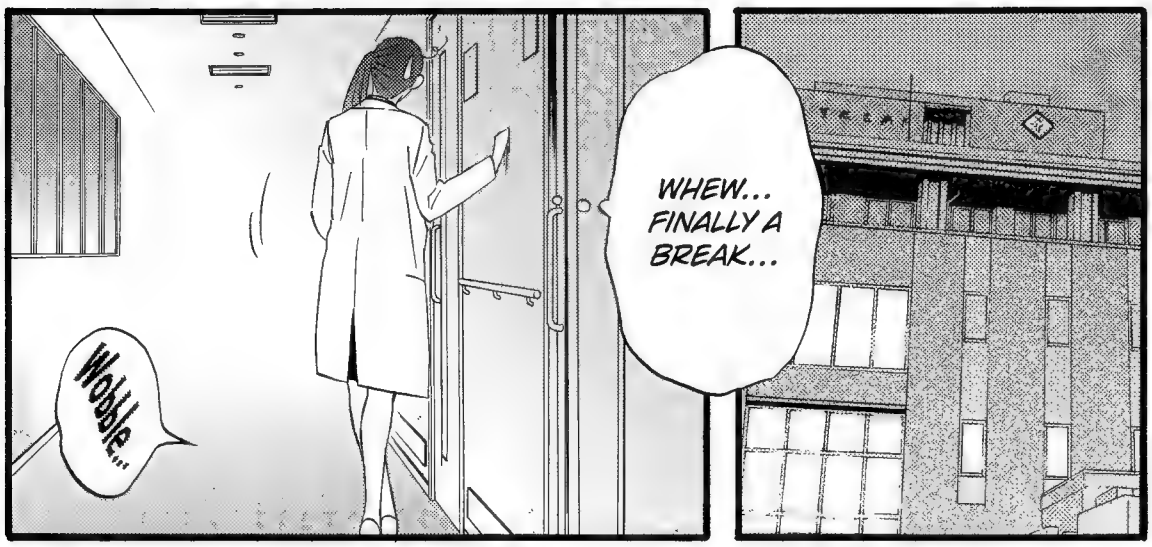
A LOT OF PEOPLE FALL ILL AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, SO...
TODAY IN PARTICULAR WAS PRETTY COLD, SO I THINK SHE'S PROBABLY QUITE BUSY...
OH...?


SHE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO. IT'S A LOT OF WORK FOR EVERYONE AT THE HOSPITAL, YOU SEE.
AFTER ALL, IT GETS EVEN COLDER DURING THE NIGHT...
SHE SAID SHE'D WORK THE NIGHT SHIFT AND THEN RETURN TO HER REGULAR SCHEDULE, BUT...
CAN'T SHE AT LEAST TAKE A SHORT BREAK?


I THOUGHT SHE'D HAVE SOME TIME TO SLEEP DURING HER SHIFT, BUT...
IT SEEMS THAT'S NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE.
But don't tell anyone I told you that...
JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME, ISHIMURA-SENSEI IS PARTICULARLY REQUESTED.
IT'S SAID THAT NO PATIENTS DIE WHILE SHE'S ON DUTY.

I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SEE HER TODAY, BUT...
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN SHE COMES HOME COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED...
I NEED TO SLEEP FIRST...
I'LL EAT DINNER TOMORROW...
Wobble
Wobble

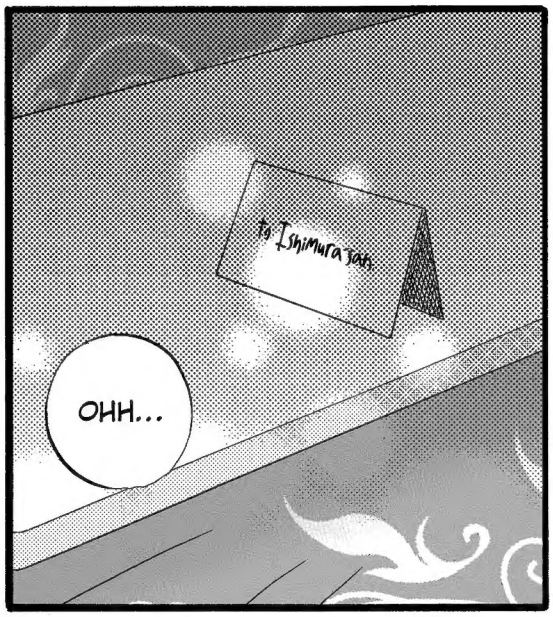
IF ISHIMURA-SAN CAN'T COME, I'LL HAVE TO DO HER PART, TOO!
LET'S GET TO IT...!!

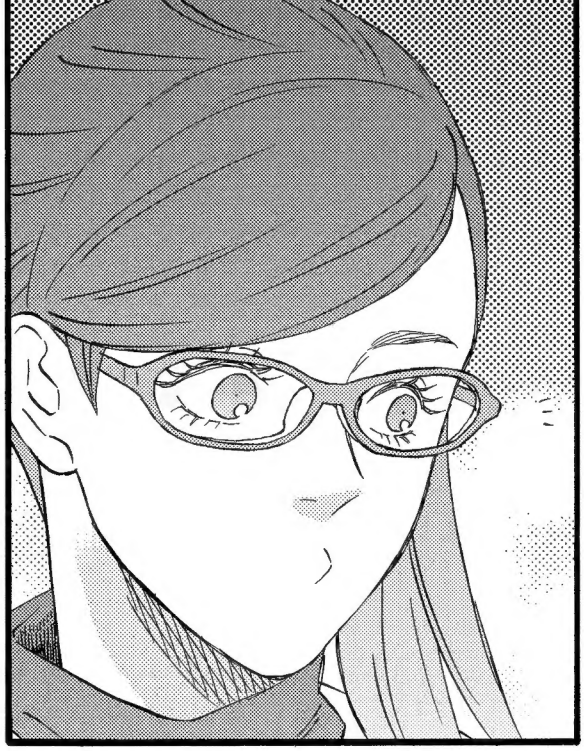

WHEW... FINALLY A BREAK...
Wobble...

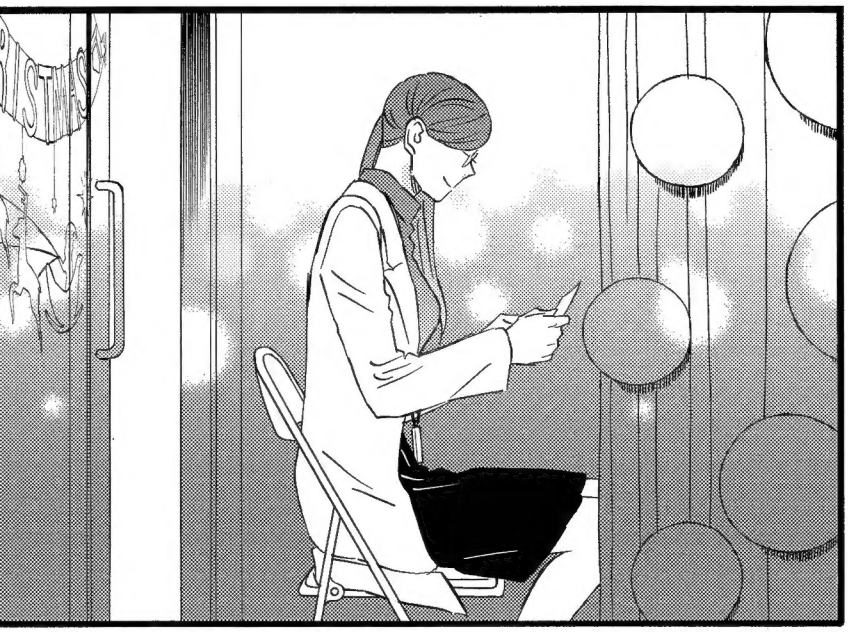
I COULD BE CALLED BACK TO WORK AT ANY TIME, THOUGH.
VISITING HOURS ARE OVER, SO KIRISHIMA-KUN MUST'VE GONE HOME BY NOW.
I SHOULD GET SOME REST WHILE I CAN...
Tap...
I'LL TAKE THIS CHANCE TO DECORATE HER ROOM...

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

YOU LOOK VERY MERRY!
HEH HEH!
ZZZ...


to: Ishimura-San
OHH...





THERE'S EVEN A CHRISTMAS CARD FOR ME?
LEMME TAKE A LOOK.
Fwip

...HEH HEH!
I SEE.

I NEVER CARED MUCH ABOUT CHRISTMAS...

I THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY A SUPERFLUOUS DECORATION ON THE CALENDAR, BUT...

IT CAN BE QUITE BEAUTIFUL WHEN SOMEONE USES THAT DECORATION TO MAKE SOMEONE ELSE HAPPY.

THANK YOU, KIRISHIMA-KUN.

Thank you for all of your hard work. Take some time to rest, even if only for a few minutes!

-Shirou